



Forest Service
Coconino National Forest
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News Release



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Forest Service seeks public input on Fossil Creek CRMP

CAMP VERDE, Ariz., Nov. 30, 2018, For Immediate Release — In an effort to best manage the Fossil Creek Wild and Scenic River and meet the requirements of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the Coconino and Tonto national forests are releasing a Notice of Availability (NOA) of a draft comprehensive river management plan (CRMP) and a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS), with proposed forest plan amendments, today in the Federal Register.

The public is invited to comment over a 90-day period, **beginning Dec. 1, 2018, through Feb. 28, 2019**, on the project's management alternatives, including a proposed action, the draft CRMP, and the environmental effects analysis. The draft CRMP, DEIS, and supporting documentation can be accessed online at <http://tinyurl.com/FossilCreekCRMP> for review.

The CRMP will guide Forest Service management of the Fossil Creek Wild and Scenic River for at least the next 15 to 20 years. The goal of the plan is to protect and enhance Fossil Creek's free flow, water quality, and its defined [outstandingly remarkable values](#) while providing for public use and enjoyment of this unique Arizona environment. The CRMP proposes management direction, monitoring, and adaptive management to help accomplish this goal. In recent years, Fossil Creek has experienced a dramatic increase in recreational use, leading the Forest Service to implement interim management measures, including a seasonal reservation system.

Additionally, at this stage in the project, five management alternatives are being considered that would provide for different visitor capacities, recreation and transportation infrastructure, and recreation experiences. These alternatives are derived directly from public and partner involvement in this project since 2010 and experience gained managing Fossil Creek since full water flows were restored in 2005. The DEIS provides detailed analysis of the potential effects implementing each alternative may have on Fossil Creek's natural and cultural values and the recreation experience.

The public can submit comments in writing through one of several methods:

- **Electronic:** E-mail to comments-southwestern-coconino-redrock@fs.fed.us (include "Fossil Creek CRMP" in the subject line).
- **Regular mail:** Mail to Coconino National Forest, Attention: Fossil Creek CRMP, P.O. Box 20429, Sedona, AZ 86341.
- **Fax:** (928) 203-7539; Attn: Fossil Creek CRMP.
- **In person:** Provide written comments in person at the Red Rock Ranger District Office, 8375 State Route 179, Sedona, AZ 86351.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be part of the public record for this proposed action. Previous comments submitted during the Nov. 29, 2016, scoping period and earlier comment periods are already part of the project record and need not be re-submitted during this current comment period.

The final CRMP/ EIS and draft record of decision (ROD) are anticipated to be completed in mid-2019. A final ROD is anticipated to be released in winter 2019/2020, following an administrative review process.

The Fossil Creek river corridor is the only intact perennial system with continuous flow without any water diversions in Arizona and is the only uninterrupted river system between the Verde River and the Mogollon Rim. As such, it spans and connects a number of biotic communities from upper Sonoran desert scrub through ponderosa pine forests. This creates a diversity of habitat for wildlife, fish, and plants, and hosts unique travertine geology and a rich cultural history.

Learn more about the draft CRMP, management alternatives, and effects analysis at three public meetings in central Arizona:

- **Jan. 23, 2019, 5:30-7 p.m., Pine Senior Center**, 3916 North Highway 87, Pine
- **Jan. 24, 2019, 5:30-7 p.m., Coconino National Forest's Supervisor Office**, 1824 S. Thompson St., Flagstaff
- **Jan. 29, 2019, 5:30-7 p.m., Camp Verde Library**, 130 Black Bridge Road, Camp Verde

Visit the Fossil Creek CRMP webpage at <http://tinyurl.com/FossilCreekCRMP> for more information, or contact Marcos Roybal, Fossil Creek project coordinator, at maroybal@fs.fed.us or (928) 203-2915.

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Flagstaff Ranger Station: (928) 526-0866
Mogollon Rim Ranger Station: (928) 477-2255
Red Rock Ranger Station: (928) 282-4119



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